

with its commodities conveying and deriving this civill contagion to all our cities and corporations, and thereby poysoning whole counties."^M In Lancashire, the clothing towns—"the Genevas of Lancashire"—rose like Puritan islands from the surrounding sea of Roman Catholicism. In Yorkshire, Bradford, Leeds and Halifax; in the midlands, Birmingham and Leicester; in the west, Gloucester, Taunton and Exeter, the capital of the west of England textile industry, were all centres of Puritanism,

The identification of the industrial and commercial classes with religious radicalism was, indeed, a constant theme of Anglicans and Royalists, who found in the vices of each an additional reason for distrusting both. Clarendon commented bitterly on the "factious humour which possessed most corporations, and the pride of their wealth";^{1J} and, after the Civil War, both the politics and the religion of the boroughs were suspect for a generation. The bishop of Oxford warned Charles IPs Government against showing them any favour, on the ground that "trading combinations" were "so many nests of faction and sedition," and that "our late miserable distractions" were "chiefly hatched in the shops of tradesmen."¹¹ Pepys commented dryly on the black looks which met the Anglican clergy as they returned to their City churches. It was

even alleged
that the courtiers hailed with glee the fire
of London,
as a providential instrument for crippling
the centre
of disaffection.¹¹

When, after 1660, Political Arithmetic
became the
fashion, its practitioners were moved by the
experience
of the last half-century and by the example
of Holland
—the economic schoolmaster of
seventeenth-century
Europe—to inquire, in the manner of any
modern
sociologist, into the relations between
economic progress
and other aspects of the national genius.
Cool, dis-
passionate, very weary of the drum
ecclesiastic, they
confirmed, not without some notes of gentle
irony, the